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ABSTRACT

The Cooperative Educational Administration Internship Program (CEAIP), an innovative program developed and initiated in 1987, is described and evaluated in this report. Methodology, in the creation of CEAIP, involved document review, individual and group interviews, and assessment survey instruments. Recommendations for program improvement include recruitment from a broader applicant pool, development of a supportive network, inclusion of a proactive curriculum, structured and increased internship time, thorough preparation of site administrators, and initiation of weekly seminars. Implications are discussed in relation to the teacher's role (e.g., provide leadership opportunities for teachers), the value of experiential learning, and the power of advocacy to foster positive climates for adult learning. Two figures are included. (13 references) (LMI)

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PRAXIS: A RESPONSE TO EFFECTIVE LEADING AND LEARNING

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Introduction

Praxis - to pass through, to practice an art, skill, or science. A rather simple definition, yet varied and complex as practice is operationalized in the context of preparing aspiring educational leaders, leaders for learning. The administrative internship, the practicum, clinical experience -- or any other term given to that piece of the preparatory program having to do with experiencing the art, skill, or science -- has gained increasing integrity as the catalyst which links theory and practice.

The assumption is that the internship is a transforming *praxis* which, when systematically designed, developed, and delivered, can generate a comprehensive understanding of the challenges of school leadership. Such an understanding provides the base for leading for learning in an environment most likely to nurture learning for multiple constituents in the educational enterprise. In response to compelling pressures for more effective leadership of, and learning in schools, the administrative internship should be examined as a viable method and model to guide the preparation of school leaders.

Perspective

Prior to 1986, opportunities for educational administrative internship experiences at The University of New Mexico (UNM) were few, "ad hoc," ill-defined, and characterized by a variety of personalized and individually tailored experiences. In 1986, prompted in part by state mandates which included internships in the licensure requirements for educational administration, the educational administration faculty at UNM and area school district personnel reviewed and revised the preparation program whereby the internship became a

programmatic expectation. The Cooperative Educational Administration Internship Program (CEAIP) was developed and initiated in 1987 as an innovative approach in the preparation program. In brief, CEAIP provided an interrelated framework featuring a programmatic system with optimum experiential learning structured to deliver the knowledge base of educational leadership; an induction system organized to screen, orient, and place administrative interns; and an advocacy system designed to supervise, support, and nurture interns through examining and modeling effective administrative practice.

To-date, three cohorts of administrative interns have completed intensive fifteen-month preparation programs. From its inception, CEAIP has attempted to maintain a capacity for change, an adaptability for providing what works best, and a singular emphasis on preparing leaders of learning.

Systematic and serendipitious revisions have propelled the internship experience into a major role within the Department of Educational Administration and the larger educational community. Revisions have been conceptually rooted in literature related to adult development and learning (Bova and Phillips, 1984; Schlossberg, 1989; Levine, 1989), interactive leadership (Sergiovanni, 1984), cohort and support systems (Lipnak and Stamps, 1982; Muse, Wasden, and Thomas, 1988), re-learning designs (Lieberman and Miller, 1984), and reflective practice (Barnett and Brill, 1988; Schon, 1984; Kolb, 1984).

An effort was also undertaken to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the CEAIP from its beginning through June of 1990. The evaluation was designed to access substantive issues which have significantly detracted from or enhanced the program's effectiveness.

Methods and Data Sources

Methods employed include a review of documents, individual and group interview transcriptions, and assessment survey instruments. Sources of data include three cycles of administrative interns, site administrators, faculty members, and the internship program staff.

Documents analyzed include CEAIP publications, school district contracts, site administrator/intern contracts, manuals, papers developed for presentations, applications for admission, tabulations of principal pool applications, rates of successful completion, and

numbers of interns obtaining administrative positions upon completion of the program.

Findings

Evaluation of the internship experience at The University of New Mexico suggests that intensive CEAIP internships are successful in providing a meaningful synthesis for the interns in learning to lead and leading for learning. Findings are organized around elements of the program which include: 1) recruitment and selection, 2) socialization of interns, 3) academic program and coursework, 4) supervision of interns, 5) field experiences, 6) weekly internship seminars, and 7) perceived readiness for administrative positions.

Recruitment and Selection

The program (CEAIP) has attracted interest from many aspiring administrators over the course of the first three years (see Figure I). The numbers recruited are particularly noteworthy given the costs associated with the program, such as relinquishing portions of salaries, added responsibilities and expectations, the extent of academic load, and program intensity and duration.

Insert Figure I About Here

Recruitment. Interns were questioned regarding their motivations for deciding to apply to the program. Among the most common responses are: 1) knowledge acquisition, 2) reputation of the program, 3) career advancement, and 4) professional growth. As Bova (1979) suggests, adults become engaged in learning situations with one or a combination of motivational orientations. These motivations are described by interns as,

> I have been in the classroom for twelve years. It is time for me to move on. The obvious place is to move into administration. I truly enjoy teaching, but what else is there unless I go into administration? (Rhonda N., 7/88)

• • • •

> I like doing different things. When I first read about this program, I hadn't ever thought seriously about becoming a principal. Then I went to the orientation meeting and thought, "Oh, what the heck, I might as well try it." I had been encouraged by one of my principals at another school to think about becoming a principal...(Vera J., 6/88)

Goals expected as a result of the program were expressed as gaining practical experience, learning first hand about administrative roles, and a more global view of how schools operate. One candidate wrote,

> I have always been actively involved in the functions and activities of the school. I want to know about the daily life of an administrator, not just how it is viewed by others...(Bobbie R., 6/88)

The desire for job-related, "hands on" experience reflects the focus and general direction that preparation programs in the field of educational administration are being encouraged to move.

Selection. Between the application process and induction, candidates engage in a specially designed assessment center process. This process is conducted by the internship staff, area school district administrators, and university faculty. It is designed to assess capacities for decision making and problem solving (through group activities and in-baskets) and abilities in written and oral communication (interviews, position papers, and individual presentations).

The assessment center is viewed across respondent groups (interns, site administrators, staff) as a positive element in the admissions process. In addition, faculty responses indicate that the assessment center model could assist in reviewing total admissions procedures, thereby assuring that candidates with strong promise for superior leadership are selected.

Socialization of Interns

A program that is as intensive as the CEAIP requires attention to the socialization of interns subsequent to admission. In a relatively short time, the transition must be made from being teachers to full time graduate students and neophyte administrators. Their initial concerns reflect those of time and effort, anticipated difficulties, kinds of experiences, and level of involvement with varied other role groups (fellow interns, site administrators, internship staff, and faculty). Interns express concerns regarding time and effort, as follows,

> After talking with [a previous year's CEAIP intern] about her experiences last year, my major concern is how I am going to manage dealing with my child during times that I have coursework and other obligations to meet. I have many things to think about. (Marty M., 6/89)

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> The university scene is new for me. Not only have I never attended a university, but it is a university in a new city and a new state. I don't know how or where to get my hands on the materials and information that I will need. (Anna C., 7/88)

Interns made requests for guidance on issues which reflected a lengthy absence from the role of student (e.g., course scheduling, parking, financial aid, library usage, research paper form and style). These relevant socialization issues became the focus for staff directed orientations early in the program.

The need for early socialization with respect to the cohort group as a support network appears critical. When asked about their fifteen month interaction with other interns, most (74%) feel their peers were very important in dealing with the intensity of the internship experience. Their peers are perceived as assisting through encouragement (95%) and being good listeners (90%) and idea givers (74%). Interactions have continued beyond the completion of the program. Eighty-four percent of the interns indicate that they continue to maintain contact with other interns in social and/or professional pursuits. The importance of the cohort cannot be minimized. As two interns relate,

> Networking with the cohort has been a powerful positive factor in this program. It has been both personal (friendship and support) and professional (information and ideas). (Marla J., 5/89)

• • • •

> I know that no matter where we go from here we will remain as close as the nearest phone. We have gone through a lot together and time and distance shouldn't diminish this. (Bonnie M., 3/90)

Academic Program and Coursework

Interns were asked to rate the courses taken as they relate to their preparation for administration. They identified several courses that were most useful in preparing them as administrators: Problem Solving, The Principalship, School Law, and Curriculum. When asked about the possible deletion of specific courses, few named any. Suggestions for curriculum additions include conflict management, budget preparation, adult development and learning, communications, school-based finance, and school-community relations.

For the most part, interns indicate the applicability of academic coursework to the field setting. The importance in bridging theory and practice is described as,

> Other internships don't give you the whole picture -- from the start to the finish and during the school day. It reflects the real world. Other programs may get requirements out of the way prior to the internship. We were provided a whole view and a way in which to examine theory in the real world. (Bea D., 5/89)

• • •

> Being in classes and talking about theory and then going to school and seeing it in action. I am a "doer" and I like this apprach. There were so many different opportunities to see different styles and I am more aware of what is going on than I could have ever been otherwise. (Sharon C., 5/89)

Faculty members gave positive commentary regarding the strong experiential base that interns bring to their courses through papers and discussions. Faculty further observed the interns' abilities to work collaboratively in group efforts. Faculty concern was expressed about 1) the extensive course load required which precludes a choice of elective courses which might enhance the interns' programs and 2) the number of courses taken in the initial summer session of the fifteen-month program as tending to fill classes and thereby excluding others from the courses. Comments from interns about the department faculty indicate positive feelings about the effectiveness of the faculty in bridging theory and practice and in modeling behaviors.

Supervision of Interns

Interns are supervised by two major role players -- the site administrator and the university field supervisors.

Site Administrators. The role of the site administrator is an important element in shaping interns' professional perceptions and administrative belief systems. The evaluation indicates that rapport between site administrators and interns was a source of support. An intern describes,

> [My site administrator] doesn't have all the answers, but I have never served with anyone who is so knowledgeable. One realizes after weeks of learning that what seems to be so easy for some is really very laborious and demanding. She has so much going on, and as many roles to play as I do...but what help she has been in encouraging me to prioritize and plan. Without this support I would feel as if I were in a whirlwind. (Barbara C., 10/88)

Interns generally view the quality of supervision by site administrators positively. However, some unevenness of intern responses suggests that additional efforts are needed on the part of the internship staff in screening site administrators, in orienting or setting expectations for the site administrator role, and in developing the role's instructional function.

Site administrators express a high degree of satisfaction from having undertaken the supervision and mentoring of CEAIP interns. The site administrators' responses reflect an awareness of the extent of their own growth and development through introspective interactions with interns. Data indicate that site administrators for CEAIP interns seek to repeat the experience. Of the fifty-nine interns in three cycles, there are thirty-one site administrators. This translates into almost two supervisory experiences for each participating site administrator and, in turn, suggests that site administrators gain satisfaction and personal reward for their efforts.

Field Supervisors. The CEAIP makes a conscious and concerted effort to seek out and employ respected and capable field supervisors. The ranks of retired administrators with extensive background, knowledge, and experience have proven to be most advantageous and positive.

Field supervisors schedule monthly visits to internship sites. More frequent visits are made

when the need presents itself. It is during this time that the intern, site administrator, and field supervisor discuss program elements and cooperatively develop strategies for productive internship experiences. The field supervisor serves as liaison between the site, the district, and the university. Evaluative data suggest that interns consider field supervisors to be a vital source of support. One intern describes the relationship in the following way,

> I appreciate [one of the field supervisors] so much. When things are so hectic, all I have to do is call or ask him to come to see me and he listens. Not only that, he has such a way of putting things in perspective. I go away feeling that it is all right not to have to be all things to all people, and that whatever I do, I should try to do well. (Gena C., 11/88)

Field Experiences

Interns report a high regard for initial opportunities in shadowing site administrators and then progressively assuming increased administrative responsibilities over the course of the school year. Site administrators and faculty agree. A high value is also placed on the competency contracts and problem projects which are jointly designed by the site administrator, intern, and field supervisors as the internship period began. The competency contracts delineate clear expectations, assist interns in organizing their time and efforts, and clarify the role of the site administrator.

Interns place a high value on the clinical activities present in the day to day world of administration. One intern describes this as follows,

> It would have been difficult for me not to have had built-in opportunities to be in an active role as an administrator. This had more relevance and meaning than I think it would have been had I just been taking classes...I think that being able to experience administration first-hand helped in analyzing situations and in making decisions. (Barbara C., 5/89)

Although faculty responses indicate a less specific knowledge regarding the daily internship field activities and expectations, there is unanimous agreement among faculty with respect to CEAIP's accomplishments and the program's importance to the mission of the department.

Weekly Internship Seminars

Weekly internship seminars are designed and conducted to provide time to share field-based experiences, to discuss concerns, and to include special presentations or guest speakers. Intern's responses indicate a high regard for the seminar's content and regularity. Many interns express concern about the high degree of structure and planned agendas in the first two cycles' seminars. They recommend more time for interaction with peers and staff and more small group activities and role-playing.

The majority of the interns note that the most meaningful seminar topics are those dealing with procedures for grievance, personal inventories and instruments, year-round schools, reform and restructuring, time management, adult learning, communication, resumes, and interviews. All interns agree that the weekly seminar is influential in developing the cohort rapport and in disseminating information deemed valuable and worthy.

Readiness for Administrative Positions

According to all accounts, the adequacy of the CEAIP in preparing its interns for the world of administration reflects high marks. All elements of the program (academic coursework, internship staff, site administration, seminars, field experiences, problem-projects, and competency contracts) are rated as strong aspects. The value of networking experiences is also perceived as a strong element.

CEAIP interns indicate a keen interest in moving into administration. Interns respond that they would seek a position either immediately following the program (57%), in a year or so (32%), or sometime in the future (11%). The types of administrative positions being sought by interns vary according to the importance each intern attaches to an enlarged perspective of administration and alternatives. One intern expresses this as follows,

> Through this program I have been exposed to many other roles in administration that have piqued my curiosity. I don't think the principalship is the only place to be, at least not for me. I am going to pursue a directorship or coordinator position. This interests me and I think I would find such a position rewarding...I am more knowledgeable about the importance of these positions in the total scheme of education. (Lori B., 3/90)

Those who were involved in applying for administrative positions have shown remarkable success in attaining positions. Figure II displays the results of CEAIP interns' efforts to be placed in a local school district's administrative pool and into subsequent administrative positions.

Insert Figure II About Here

Placement in the administrative pool necessitates successfully completing an assessment center, the SRI/Gallup Administrator Perceiver Interview, and interviews for specific administrative positions in schools. To-date, partial data indicate that, while other (non-CEAIP) applicants for administrative positions in the local school district have done relatively well, a smaller percentage have obtained positions than have CEAIP interns and the period of time prior to administrative appointment has been more extensive than with CEAIP interns. The judgment of faculty and school district administrators suggests that the percentage of CEAIP interns moving into administrative positions in less than two years is better than can normally be anticipated and generally better than administrative candidates from other preparation programs.

It should be noted that several CEAIP interns define the success of the training program in terms of their being selected into a local school district's administrative pool or in terms of their obtaining an administrative position upon completion of the program. One intern whose ultimate definition of success was "making" the local school district's principal's pool writes,

> I am disappointed that all I have worked for this year comes down to this. What does the work and effort mean if the end result is exclusion from opportunity? (Anna C., 5/89)

Other interns, however, define success as the achievement of academic and/or personal goals, growth of self, knowledge acquisition, and a broadened perspective. One writes,

> It does not matter where I am next year...I am an educational leader. I am no longer only a teacher but am an important part in improving the state of education as we know it. I will wait until this is recognized and acknowledged. (Marty M., 3/90)

Efforts to encourage interns to define success more broadly and/or in terms of personal growth is a continuing focus of the internship staff.

Recommendations Derived from the Evaluation

Several recommendations emerged from the evaluative data which suggest programmatic improvements whereby CEAIP interns and others in similar preparation programs better learn to "lead for learning." The assumption is that those responsible for designing and delivering programs in which adults learn to lead must themselves model leading for learning. Modeling should convey the willingness to revise, modify, add, subtract, change, and seek improvements. Based upon the data and findings of this particular evaluative effort, the following considerations are offered for those in positions of leadership for aspiring administrators.

Recruitment, Selection, and Admission

Programs of this nature are highly dependent upon the quality of participants. Efforts should be made to seek broader pools of applicants for *interns* as well as *site administrators*. Consideration should be given to the assessment center process as a pre-admissions criteria for departments of educational administration as well as for other specific programs. The data gained would provide useful information in advisement and program planning.

Socialization to New Expectations

Cohort development should be promoted as a support network for administrative interns and also for site administrators. Due to the nature of programs such as the CEAIP, it is programmatically advantageous to provide multiple opportunities at the outset whereby participants are socialized to the expectations for their future roles, functions, and responsibilities. Socialization activities on a continuing basis can further encourage a supportive professional network which endures past completion of the program and into subsequent careers as school leaders.

Academic Program and Coursework

Requirements for coursework should be examined as to the relevance held regarding the aspirations of interns and intern elective choices. A common core of academic courses, coupled with electives, would be more applicable to those whose interests, background, and career plans are alternate to the principalship. Pro-active, interactive, and experiential elements of coursework should be considered by faculty with focus on appropriate modeling behaviors in leading and learning.

Supervision of Interns

Means of identifying, screening, and selecting potential site administrators should be fully explored. It stands to reason that abilities and examples set by these role players are crucial to the nurturing of potential administrators. As an integral part of the program, site administrators must be oriented, prepared, and developed with equally as much enthusiasm and effort as those whom they themselves orient, prepare and develop.

Field Experiences

Approaches to increasing the amount of time that interns are afforded in an administrative capacity should be explored. Internship days which are scheduled, planned, and structured have proven more appropriate than random or haphazard time in clinical activities. It would seem that, if time as an administrative intern were increased to that of at least a half-time employee, gains would be reflected accordingly.

Weekly Internship Seminars

An assessment of interns needs upon admission could serve as the basis for formulating internship seminars. An awareness of academic course content, by the internship staff, would further serve to avoid duplication of effort, fill voids, and enhance the meaning and importance of the internship seminar as a synthesizing vehicle between coursework and field experiences.

Readiness for Administration

Efforts to broaden and expand definitions of success to encompass dimensions beyond obtaining an administrative position should be encouraged. If one of the underlying assumptions of an administrative preparation program is to prepare leaders for learning, it seems warranted that those that aspire to administrative positions need to spend an appropriate amount of time examining who they are and how that relates to facilitating learning for multiple constituencies.

Conclusion and Commentary

How do the findings of *one* program's evaluation relate to improving the preparation of leaders for learning and learning to lead? The findings suggest that there are implications to be derived. The focus of those implications tend to include 1) the teacher's role in leading for learning in relation to the administrative role, 2) an acknowledgment of the value of experiential learning for adults, and 3) a realization of the power of advocacy systems in leadership preparation programs.

The Teaching Role in Relation to the Administrative Role in Leading for Learning

Administrative internship programs would be well served if they devoted attention to the role of school leaders in creating an image of teaching as a collaborative professional enterprise (Restine, 1990). If we are to assume that the most able are being selected as administrative candidates, their professional preparation must include an examination of the perception of teaching. The broadened perspective of interns, as the program progresses, indicates that they acquire a different set of lenses with which to view their professional world.

The early motivations of the interns suggest that the obvious course for career development is to move from teaching to administration. Sykes (1990) suggests that "the incentive structure for teaching is upside down: Rewards go to those who leave teaching, not to those who progressively deepen their commitment and skill" (p. 89). Given that many candidates for administrative positions come from the ranks of teaching, the task for administrative internship programs is to promote an educational enterprise in which administrators join collaboratively

with teachers to lead for learning and, through collaborative processes, provide leadership opportunities through which teachers may seek new challenges and experience new concerns as developing adults.

The Value of Experiential Learning.

Engagement in an internship of this intensity and duration suggests personal growth when involved in the realities of the system in which one will work. Internship model development, content, and structures that emulate the reality of school administration appear to lend themselves to both *doing* and *undergoing*.

Immersion into the reality of administrative practice provides the cornerstone for knowledge as it is brought to bear on problematic situations. The practice of administration involves the exercise of individual performance within a complex social setting. The selection of experiences and practices must account for roles, tasks, personalities, values, and time in formulating the design of practice. The value of experiential learning cannot be underestimated. When integrated dynamically over time with adequate advocacy systems and sufficient knowledge bases, experiential learning becomes a transforming process resulting in remarkable personal and professional growth. As Krueger (1990) states,

> Internship programs can provide powerful learning experiences for potential school administrators. At their best, internship programs can integrate the university's knowledge base with both field experiences and mentoring guidance to equip the administrative intern with the leadership skills in identifying, addressing, and solving school based problems (p. 1).

The Power of Advocacy in Leadership Preparation Programs.

Providing for systems of support and advocacy requires conscious modeling on the part of those who design and develop preparation programs for future leaders of learning. A climate must be modeled that encourages esprit de corps and positive interpersonal regard. An environment for learning to lead must be created which reinforces learning through inquiry, reflection, demonstration, and internalization. The capacity for leadership involves an examination of belief systems and the grounding of these in identifying and solving issues in

the schools. Advocacy and other support systems appear to be major forces which foster such positive climates for adult learning. The implications suggest that stakeholders and constituencies involved in the professional preparation of educational administrators should engage in joint inquiry and interaction for the purposes of improving learning to lead and leading for learning.

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Group	Interest Indicated	Attended Orientation	Applied	Admitted	Enrolled
CYCLE I (1987-88)	N.A.	N.A.	25	16	9
CYCLE II (1988-89)	83	55	38	23	23
CYCLE III (1989-90)	68	47	39	28	27
CYCLE IV (1990-91)	88	37	25	23	19

Figure I. CEAIP Application and Enrollment Data

GROUP	LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT'S PRINCIPALS' POOL			TOTAL POOL	IN ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS	
	Applied	Passed	Pass (%)	Pass (%)	Local District	Other
CYCLE I	8	6	75	N.A.	5	0
CYCLE II	23	22	96	61	11	3
CYCLE III	20	10	50	37	9	1

Figure II. Principal Pool and Administrative Position Data (as of September, 1990)